



HONORING HOOSIER VETERANS

Office of Governor Mitch Daniels

Volume 1, Issue 1

April 17, 2006

Indiana Becomes First State
in Nation to Join "America
Supports You."



Flags Can Be Lowered to Honor Fallen Hoosiers.

Gov. Mitch Daniels has authorized the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs to grant veteran groups the right to lower the American and Indiana flags to half mast at their posts upon the death of a member until his or her funeral.

Groups seeking to lower their flag, can obtain an order from Gov. Daniels by contacting their Local County Veterans' Service Officer or:

Ind. Dept. of Veterans Affairs
302 W. Washington Street,
Room E120
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Office: (800) 400-4520
Fax (317) 232-7721

GOVERNOR DANIELS SPENDS EASTER WITH HOOSIER HEROES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) -- Gov. Mitch Daniels attended Easter Mass in Baghdad with Indiana troops serving in Iraq.

Following the early morning services Sunday, Daniels and three other governors on the trip sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense spent much of the day traveling to Afghanistan, according to a news release from the governor's office.

Daniels traveled with Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack, West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin and Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, the president's brother. It was the seventh delegation of governors to make a trip to Iraq. The trip was cloaked in secrecy as a security precaution.

Daniels said visiting the troops on the Easter weekend provided a special opportunity to convey the state's gratitude.

"There is no other time I could imagine, with the possible exception of Christmas, that would rival this for communicating how truly grateful we are," Daniels said during a conference call from Iraq on Saturday.

The governors were expected to attend a reception with Afghan governors Sunday evening. On Monday, Daniels will meet with Indiana troops deployed to Afghanistan. He is expected to return to Indiana on Wednesday.



Gov. Daniels with Sgt. Scott Drake of the Indiana National Guard in Iraq.

DoD Photo

The group spent Thursday in Washington attending classified intelligence briefings before departing for the Persian Gulf.

In Kuwait on Friday, Daniels toured military bases and met with Indiana soldiers. While there, he re-enlisted three members of the Indiana National Guard.

The delegation spent Saturday in Baghdad, where Daniels presented a Purple Heart to Indiana National Guard Staff Sgt. Richard Blakely. The Richmond resident who is originally from Plainfield was shot in the back in January and has since returned to active duty.

Morale remains high among the troops who are deployed in the Middle East, Daniels said. He expects to return to Indiana with scores of notes and messages for family and friends of those he visited.

"I'm going to be making a lot of phone calls to fiancées I've met," he said. "Without exception, these men and women believe they are involved in something important here. They believe it's important that their mission succeed."

Nearly 800 members of the state's National Guard are deployed in Iraq. Another 140 Guard members are deployed in Afghanistan.

GOV. DANIELS HELPS HOOSIER SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN

Governor Mitch Daniels signed several laws honoring and supporting Hoosiers serving our country in the military.

- ★ A new "Support our Troops" license plate will fund a trust to provide assistance to military families in need.
- ★ The Governor signed legislation restoring the Remis-

sion of Fees benefit for children of wartime-era disabled veterans, regardless of disability rating.

- ★ Thanks to the General Assembly and Gov. Daniels, it is now illegal in Indiana to protest near a funeral. Since this law took effect, protesters have canceled plans to stage demonstrations at the

funerals of many fallen Hoosier Heroes.

- ★ Finally, Governor Daniels joined Indiana Department of Veterans' Affairs Director Tom Applegate to dedicate a new memorial wall honoring those Hoosier men and women who have lost their lives during the Global War on Terror.